# INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY AND WATER COMMISSION UNITED STATES AND MEXICO UNITED STATES SECTION

#### UNITED STATES SECTION DIRECTIVE

VOLUME: II CHAPTER: 701

UPDATED: 13 September 2004

**SUBJECT:** Travel and Transportation Manual

**TO:** Commissioner, Deputy Commissioners, Legal Counsel, Division Heads,

Project Managers and President of AFGE

**CONTROL:** Financial Services Division

**AUTHORITY:** Agency Directives, Executive Order 11348 of April 20,

1967. This directive generally follows the Federal Travel Regulation.

**RESPONSIBILITIES:** All travelers and travel coordinators are instructed to

implement the requirements of this directive (including revised forms) in planning and submitting for reimbursement of official agency travel. The Financial

Services Division will pay in accordance with this directive.

**701.3 SUPERSESSION:** Volume II, Chapter M701, December 5, 2003.

**701.4 EFFECTIVE DATE:** This revised directive is effective immediately.

FOR THE COMMISSIONER

**Carlos Marin** 

**Deputy Commissioner** 

# International Boundary and Water Commission United States and Mexico U. S. Section

#### **Travel and Transportation Manual**

Travel and transportation often make up a significant area of each Cost Center Manager's budget. Therefore, it is important that we are all aware of the guidance surrounding travel. To facilitate research, this directive is broken out into: travel request, actual travel and travel settlement with the most common questions asked.

#### 701.1. Travel Request

Before beginning any travel, you must have written or electronic authorization prior to incurring any travel expense. Use the latest IBWC Form 486 to request and authorize all official travel. If it is not practicable or possible to obtain such authorization prior to travel, your agency may approve a specific authorization for reimbursement of travel expenses after travel is completed. If travel authorization is not practicable or possible prior to the travel, the U.S. Section will accept written justification stating the circumstances for such an occurrence and verified by the traveler-s supervisor in order to pay requested travel expenses. However, written or electronic advance authorization is required for: use of reduced fares for group or charter arrangements; payment of a reduced per diem rate; acceptance of payment from a non-Federal source for travel expenses; and for travel expenses related to attendance at a conference.

#### **701.1.A Travel Request Approval**

All travel shall be either authorized or approved by the head of the agency or by an official to whom such authority has been delegated. For the USIBWC, the delegated authorized official is the employee's direct supervisor. Upon the supervisor's approval, the travel order goes to the Cost Center Manager (CCM) who will certify as to availability of funds and review to ensure that the request is justified. Once the CCM reviews and approves the travel, the request will be reviewed and approved by the U.S. Section Commissioner prior to the travel request going to the Budget Office for approval and obligation.

**701.1.B** Who in the agency is authorized to establish travel controls? Agency heads shall establish controls to ensure that only travel that is essential to the purposes of the

government and for accomplishment of the agency=s mission is authorized or approved. The Request and Authorization for Official Travel form, IBWC 486, includes a statement signed by the authorizing official that states: I certify that this authorized travel is essential to the purposes of the Government and for accomplishment of the agency=s mission and that it is the most cost effective routing and means of accomplishing this activity, including teleconferencing and internet access. The approving official is to ensure that the preceding statement is on all payment requests certified for payment.

701.1.D Who in the agency is responsible for proper travel justification? Generally, the first level supervisor is the initial approval of a travel request and the authorizing official is the cost center manager and the Commissioner, USIBWC. The authorizing officials should be aware of travel plans, including plans to take annual leave in conjunction with travel, and shall ensure appropriate consideration of the need for the travel, the use of substitutes (i.e., mail, facsimile, teleconferencing, etc.), and the most effective routing and means of accomplishing travel. The *Request and Authorization for Official Travel form, IBWC 486*, includes a statement signed by the authorizing official as follows: *I certify that this authorized travel is essential to the purposes of the Government and for accomplishment of the agency=s mission and that it is the most cost effective routing and means of accomplishing this activity, including teleconferencing and internet access.* 

# **701.1.E** Who in the agency is authorized to issue Aunlimited open® travel authorization? This type of authorization allows an employee to travel for any purpose without further authorization. Unlimited open authorizations shall be issued only for department or agency heads, their deputies, or other principal agency officials as the agency head or deputy may designate and managers of major subunits where no supervisor is present. The Commissioner designates the following positions to be issued Unlimited Open Annual Travel Authorizations for all travel except for conferences, foreign travel, and training sessions that require trip-by-trip authorization: Commissioner, Deputy Commissioners, Executive Engineer and treaty Secretary.

# 701.1.F What travel arrangements require specific authorization or prior approval? You must have specific authorization or prior approval for:

- (a) Use of premium-class service on common carrier transportation;
- (b) Use of a foreign carrier;
- (c) Use of reduced fares for group or charter arrangements;

- (d) Use of cash to pay for common carrier transportation;
- (e) Use of extra-fare train service;
- (f) Travel by ship;
- (g) Use of rental car;
- (h) Use of a Government aircraft;
- (i) Payment of a reduced per diem rate;
- (j) Payment of actual expense;
- (k) Travel expenses related to emergency travel;
- (l) Transportation expenses related to threatened law enforcement/investigative employees and members of their families;
- (m) Travel expenses related to travel to a foreign area;
- (n) Acceptance of payment from a non-Federal source for travel expenses; and
- (o) Travel expenses related to attendance at a conference.

Most agency travel is authorized on trip-by-trip basis. There are a few agency officials who are authorized to be issued annual travel orders under the new IBWC Form 79, Request for Unlimited Travel Authorization. This form stipulates each of the arrangements for which the IBWC Form 79 is not authorized and therefore specific authority is required.

#### **702.** Actual Travel

- **702.1** What travel expenses does my agency pay? Your agency may only pay those expenses essential to the transaction of official business, which include: (a) transportation expenses (e.g., airline, personal vehicle, rental car, etc.); (b) per diem expenses (e.g., hotels, meals); (c) miscellaneous expenses (e.g., telephone, tips to courtesy shuttles), and (d) travel expenses of an employee with special needs.
- **702.2** What standard of care must I use in incurring travel expenses? You must exercise the same care in incurring expenses that a prudent person would exercise if traveling on personal business. Bottom line, what is most advantageous to the government. Example, El Paso International Airport has more than one option of parking. This agency will reimburse up to short term parking fee for safety of the traveler. However, parking fee and mileage must not exceed the cost of taxi fare to/from the airport.
- **702.3 For what travel expenses am I responsible?** You are responsible for expenses over the reimbursement limits established by this Directive. The agency will not pay for

excess cost resulting from circuitous routes, delays, luxury accommodations, *personal preference* or services unnecessary or unjustified in the performance of official business.

- Nhat do I do if I change or do not use a common carrier reservation? If you know you will change or not use your reservation, you must take action to change or cancel it and notify the Budget Office and/or the Financial Services Division. The U.S. Section requires that the traveler make all reservation changes through the same person who made the initial reservation. If this is not possible, the traveler is to make his/her own changes through the Travel Management System or directly with the common carrier. If the common carrier is to change, the traveler may need to initiate a travel order modification depending on the increase in cost. The unused or partially used tickets may be returned to the person making the travel reservations (if other than the traveler) and the receipt for returned tickets submitted with the travel reimbursement voucher in order to receive proper credit. Failure to follow the above procedures may subject the traveler to liability for any resulting losses.
- **702.5** When must I use a contract city-pair fare? You must always use a contract city-pair fare, (an Internet list of city-pairs is available at http://pub.fss.gsa.gov/services/citypairs), if you are a civilian employee of an agency, unless one or more of the following conditions exist(s):
  - (a) Space or a scheduled contract flight is not available in time to accomplish the purpose of your travel, or use of contract service would require you to incur unnecessary overnight lodging costs which would increase the total cost of the trip; or
  - (b) The contractor's flight schedule is inconsistent with explicit policies of your Federal department or agency with regard to scheduling travel during normal working hours; or
  - (c) A non-contract carrier offers a lower fare available to the general public, the use of which will result in a lower total trip cost to the Government, to include the combined costs of transportation, lodging, meals, and related expenses.
- **702.6** Are there other situations when I must use a non-contract fare? You may also use a non-contract fare such as a through fare, special fare, commutation fare, excursion fare or reduced-rate round-trip fare in the following circumstances:
  - (a) Your agency determines prior to your travel that this type of service is practical and economical to the Government; and
  - (b) In the case of a fare that is restricted or has specific eligibility

requirements, you know or reasonably can anticipate, based on the travel as planned, that you will use the ticket.

- 702.7 What is my liability for unauthorized use of a non-contract carrier when contract service is available and I do not meet one of the exceptions for required use?

  Any additional costs or penalties incurred by you resulting from unauthorized use of non-contract service are borne by you.
- **702.8** What must I do with compensation an airline gives me if it <u>denies</u> me a seat on a plane? If you are performing official travel and a carrier denies you a confirmed reserved seat on a plane, you must give your agency any payment you receive for liquidated damages. You must ensure the carrier shows the Treasurer of the United States as payee on the compensation check and forward the payment to the appropriate agency official.
- May I keep compensation an airline gives me for voluntarily vacating my seat on my scheduled airline flight when the airline asks for volunteers? Yes, if: (a) voluntarily vacating your seat will not interfere with performing your official duties; and (b) additional travel expenses incurred as a result of vacating your seat, are borne by you and are not reimbursed; but (c) volunteering delays your travel during duty hours and prevents you from returning to work, your agency will charge you with annual leave for the additional hours. Additionally, you will not be compensated for overtime or compensatory time. On December 28, 2001, the President signed into law S. 1438, National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2002. Section 1116 of this law authorizes Federal employees to retain promotional items, including frequent flyer miles, earned on official travel.
- **702.10** What is my liability for unauthorized use of Government vehicle? You are responsible for any additional cost resulting from unauthorized use of a Government vehicle and may be subject to administrative and/or criminal liability for misuse of Government property. This includes a rental automobile obtained with Government funds.
- 702.11 When may I use a privately owned vehicle (POV)? When authorized by your agency. The use of privately owned conveyance shall be authorized only when its use is advantageous to the Government. A determination that the use of privately owned conveyance would be advantageous to the Government shall be preceded by a determination that transportation by common carrier, a Government-

contract rental automobile, or Government furnished transportation is not available or would not be advantageous to the Government on IBWC form 486.

# **702.12** What will I be reimbursed if I am authorized to use common carrier transportation and I use a POV instead? You will be reimbursed on a mileage basis (currently, 37.5 cents), plus per diem, not to exceed the total constructive cost of the authorized method of common carrier transportation plus per diem. Your agency must determine the constructive cost of transportation and per diem by common carrier.

# 702.13 What will I be reimbursed if I am authorized to use a Government automobile and I use a POV instead?

- (a) **Reimbursement based on Government costs.** Unless you are committed to use a Government vehicle, your reimbursement will be limited to the cost that would be incurred for use of a Government automobile (at present 27 cents per mile).
- (b) Partial reimbursement when you are committed to use a Government owned automobile. When you are committed to use a Government automobile or would not ordinarily be authorized to use a privately owned vehicle due to the availability of a GOV, you will be reimbursed 10.5 cents per mile or rate in effect at time of travel.
- **702.12** How much will my agency reimburse me for a tip to a taxi, shuttle service, or courtesy transportation driver? Your agency will reimburse an amount determined to be reasonable. The U.S. Section has determined that following tips are reasonable for reimbursement: (a) 20% of the taxi fare; and (b) \$2 for courtesy shuttles.
- **702.13 When must I travel using U.S. flag air carrier service?** You are required by 49 U.S.C. 40118, commonly referred to as the `Fly America Act," to use U.S. flag air carrier service, compared to using a foreign air carrier, for all air travel funded by the U.S. Government, except when the use would:
  - (a) Extend your travel time by at least 6 hours or more; or
  - **(b)** Increase the number of aircraft changes you must make outside of the U.S. by 2 or more; or
  - (c) Require a connecting time of 4 hours or more at an overseas interchange point.

Otherwise, you must use a U.S. flag air carrier service when:

(a) Use of a foreign air carrier is determined to be a matter of necessity; or

- (b) The transportation is provided under a bilateral or multilateral air transportation agreement to which the United States Government and the government of a foreign country are parties, and which the Department of Transportation has determined meets the requirements of the Fly America Act; or
- (c) You are an officer or employee of the Department of State, United States Information Agency, United States International Development Cooperation Agency, or the Arms Control Disarmament Agency, and your travel is paid with funds appropriated to one of these agencies, and your travel is between two places outside the United States; or
- (d) No U.S. flag air carrier provides service on a particular leg of the route, in which case foreign air carrier service may be used, but only to or from the nearest interchange point on a usually traveled route to connect with U.S. flag air carrier service; or
- (e) A U.S. flag air carrier involuntarily reroutes your travel on a foreign air carrier; or
- (f) Service on a foreign air carrier would be three hours or less, and use of the U.S. flag air carrier would at least double your en route travel time; or
- (g) When the costs of transportation are reimbursed in full by a third party, such as a foreign government, international agency, or other organization
- **702.14** What determines my maximum per diem reimbursement rate? Where you obtain lodging determines your maximum per diem reimbursement rate. If you arrive at your lodging location after 12 midnight, you can claim lodging cost for the preceding calendar day. If no lodging is required, the applicable M&IE reimbursement rate is the rate for the TDY location.
- **702.15** What is my option if the Government lodging rate plus applicable taxes exceeds my lodging reimbursement? You may request reimbursement on an actual expense basis, not to exceed 300% of the maximum per diem allowance. Approval of Aactual expense® is at the discretion the U. S. Section. The U.S. Section will authorize reimbursement to the traveler at Aactual expenses® if the request is: (a) submitted prior to commencing travel; (b) one of the following authorized justifications: (1) lodging and/or meals are procured at a prearranged place such as a hotel where a meeting, conference, or training session is held; (2) costs have escalated because of special events such as missile launchings, sporting events, World=s Fair, conventions, or natural disasters, and lodging and meal expenses within prescribed allowances cannot be obtained nearby with costs to commute to/from the nearby location consuming most or all of the savings achieved from occupying less expensive lodging; (3) because of mission requirements; or other reason approved within the agency as applicable; and (4)

the request is submitted on the Request for Reimbursement of Actual Travel Expenses, IBWC form 78, to the head of the Department, Deputy Commissioner or Commissioner of the U.S. Section and is in accordance with this directive. IBWC Form 78 allows a traveler to request actual cost for lodging and/or meals, but the traveler is required to itemize his/her expenses. In cases where the lodging rate, on arrival, exceeds the authorized rate, IBWC Form 78 may be submitted for approval with justification from the traveler stating the reason.

- 702.16 What expenses must I itemize under "actual expense"? You must itemize all expenses, including meals, (each meal must be itemized separately) for which you will be reimbursed under "actual expense". However, expenses that do not accrue daily (e.g., laundry, dry cleaning, etc.), may be averaged over the number of days your agency authorizes/approves actual expenses. Receipts are required for lodging, regardless of amount and any individual meal when the cost exceeds \$75. Your agency may require receipts for other allowable per diem expenses. When your agency limits M&IE reimbursement to either the prescribed maximum M&IE rate for the locality concerned or a reduced M&IE rate, it may or may not require M&IE itemization at its discretion.
- **702.17 What miscellaneous expenses are reimbursable?** Your agency may authorize or approve reimbursement of miscellaneous travel expenses. Examples of such expenses include but are not limited to the following: transaction fees (ATM), use of computers, printers, faxing machines, and scanners, conference room and telephone calls. *If an item/s is questionable, the appropriate justification is stated on the reimbursement voucher.*
- 702.18 Reimbursement of telephone calls. Because the Government employee is inconvenienced when traveling on official business, the traveler is afforded the ability to maintain contact with the place of residence or with those in his care. This agency issues a Federal calling card to all travelers that enables each traveler to call at a low cost to the agency. Any employee making long distance calls while in a temporary duty status (TDY) and failing to use his/her agency-issued Federal calling card must itemize these calls on their travel request and provide receipts to receive reimbursement. Reimbursement is limited to \$5 per day CONUS and \$15 per day OCONUS, while on official government travel away from home, without regard to length of travel. You should use Government provided services (calling card) for all official communications. When they are not available, commercial services may be used. If prepaid phone cards are used, the traveler must provide the actual usage of the card and provide the card

and receipt with the reimbursement claim. On request of the traveler, a Government calling card may be signed out from his/her supervisor and returned upon completion of the TDY.

- **702.19 Can I be reimbursed for Internet costs?** Increasingly, hotels are charging travelers for utilizing the establishment's Internet access. Some of these connection fees can be high. In order for a traveler to be reimbursed, authorization for Internet connectivity cost must be authorized as "other expenses" in the travel order. Prior to authorizing Internet expense on a travel order, the supervisor is responsible for determining if the costs are necessary for accomplishment of the TDY mission. Upon check-in to the hotel, the USIBWC traveler should inquire as to the options available and corresponding costs. Some hotels have dedicated computers or rooms available at little or no cost, while others charge by the hour for high-speed access. USIBWC pays for the Sprint 1-800 line, which can be accessed from the hotel room telephone for a minimal fee. The speed of the 1-800 connection to the Internet will be considerably slower, but the expense should be more cost effective. Employees are to follow the guidelines of United States Section Directive, Volume II, Chapter 101, paragraph H101.7.2 for "Limited Personal Use" of government equipment for personal use. Nonofficial use while on travel status must "not interfere with official business and involves minimal additional expense to **the government**." Internet charges are communication expenses and therefore, is limited to the condition in 702.17 for personal and reasonable amount allowed for official use by the traveler's cost center manager (CCM).
- 702.20 Must I use government contract travel services? Yes, the U.S. Section provides travel management services under a government contract, so you must use these services to arrange for common carrier transportation, lodging, and rental car(s). The advantage of this service is that cancellations do not result in high fees to the agency. Additionally, changes can usually be made at a lower cost. Services under a government contract may be furnished by a commercial travel agent, electronic travel services system, or other travel management services provider. GSA city-pair fare contract carriers and any preferred value lodging programs and rental car agreements must also be used.
- **702.21** What is the preferred method of payment for official travel expenses? As a general policy, employees traveling on official business are responsible for meeting their current travel expenses. However, Federal employees should not have to pay official travel expenses entirely from personal funds unless the employee has elected not to use the available government travel charge cards with included ATM service access. It is

the policy of the U.S. Section to issue government travel cards to frequent travelers (five or more trips a year) or others requesting one. The Chief, Financial Services Division is designated the coordinator for the government travel charge card program. The charge card shall be used to charge all travel related costs. The charge card allows access to ATM cash for those instances where the card is not accepted or convenient, so cash advances are not available to travelers with a government travel card or those entitled to a card, but declining one. Cash advances are available to infrequent travelers who do not have a government travel charge card and when authorized by the cost center manager and supervisor. All travel orders with cash advance requests must be received by Financial Services Division a minimum of seven working days before traveling.

- **702.22** May we prohibit an employee from using a POV on official travel? No, but if the employee elects to use a POV instead of an alternative form of transportation you authorize, you must: (a) limit reimbursement to the constructive cost of the authorized method transportation, which is the sum of per diem and transportation expenses the employee would reasonably have incurred, and (b) charge leave for any duty hours that are missed as a result of travel by POV.
- 702.23 As a supervisor, how do I administer the authorization and payment of travel expenses? You must limit the authorization and payment of travel expenses to travel that is necessary to accomplish your mission in the most economical and effective manner, in accordance with the rules stated in this directive. Consideration should be given, but not limited to budget constraints, adherence to travel policies, and reasonableness of expenses. You should always consider alternatives, (e.g., teleconferencing), prior to authorizing travel. NOTE: As much as is possible, a supervisor should review all travel requests to ensure that travel to and from a government controlled activity is within the traveler's normal tour of duty. Hours outside the traveler's tour of duty are compensable as overtime or compensatory time when the traveler is non-exempt in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (<a href="www.opm.gov/oca/worksch/HTEL/TRAVEL.asp">www.opm.gov/oca/worksch/HTEL/TRAVEL.asp</a>). IBWC Form 82 (see Appendix A) can help a supervisor determine whether or not compensatory leave or overtime will be due the traveler.
- **702.24** Who in the agency is authorized to approve conferences, meetings, and training sessions? Travel of this nature shall be authorized on a trip-by-trip basis. When authorizing such travel, the approving official shall ensure that the number of attendees from the agency is necessary and justified. The Budget Officer shall approve the Request and Authorization for Official Travel form, IBWC 486, that states, "I certify

that funds are available and the number of attendees from the agency is necessary and justified in accordance with the provisions of Agency Directive."

- **702.25 I work an alternate work schedule and will be going TDY for training. Do I** have to change my work schedule? Yes. In accordance with HQ Directive, Volume 1, Chapter 649, employees on either a flexi-tour work schedule or 4-10 compressed work schedule will go to a standard tour of duty for the week in which TDY for training occurs. Employees on a 5/4-9 alternate work schedule must go to a standard tour of duty (8 hour days, 5 days a week) during the entire pay period in which the TDY for training occurs.
- 702.26 What is government policy regarding conference attendance and planning? The policy of the government is that agencies shall exercise strict fiscal responsibility by selecting conference sites that minimize conference administrative costs, conference attendees' travel costs, and conference attendees' time costs. It is also the policy of the U.S. Section to minimize travel costs by authorizing the minimum number of attendees necessary to accomplish the agency goals. Therefore, the Budget Officer shall authorize Government sponsorship or co-sponsorship of a conference, which involves travel by 30 or more employees. When a conference involves travel by 30 or more employees, the agency shall document the cost of each alternative conference site and retain a record of the documentation for every conference held. The agency shall make the documentation available for inspection by the agency's Office of Inspector General or other interested parties.
- 702.27 Who is authorized to approve change of official station/relocation travel orders? Travel and related entitlements for a change of official station or relocation determined to be in the interest of the government, shall be authorized on a move-by-move basis. This also includes new appointees when issued an authorization for travel to the first duty station. The employee's supervisor shall recommend the payment, and the Budget Officer will certify availability of funds for all change of station entitlements.
- **702.28** I've been invited to make a presentation at another government agency and they have volunteered to pay my airline cost. What do I do? You must receive pre-approval from your supervisor or Cost Center Manager prior to accepting the payment in accordance with Section 303(j) of Executive Order 11348 of April 20, 1967, OPM regulations issued under section 401(b) of that Order and 5 U.S.C. 4111(a).

- 702.29 The agency approves the meeting organizers to pay for my airfare. However, when I arrive at the conference, I find out that the meeting organizers are also paying for the hotel room and meals. Can I accept? Under the revised rule, you can accept these additional gifts, as long as you notify the agency within seven days of the end of your trip. However, you cannot accept payment for your hotel room from anyone but the meeting organizers who paid for the airfare AND the meeting organizers must be federal agencies or IRS 501(c)(3) corporations only. Please be aware that agency reimbursement and gifts must never exceed actual expenses.
- **702.30 I've been invited to speak at a conference; may I ask the conference organizers to pay for my travel?** No, you cannot solicit for another agency or nongovernment source to pay any part of your expenses to attend the event for ethical reasons and to avoid claims of unlawful conduct. However, you may notify the organizers that you cannot attend due to budgetary limitations.
- **702.31 I've been invited to speak at a conference; may I ask the conference organizers to pay for my travel?** No, you cannot solicit for another agency or nongovernment source to pay any part of your expenses to attend the event for ethical reasons and to avoid claims of unlawful conduct. However, you may notify the organizers that you cannot attend due to budgetary limitations.
- 702.32 I work in a field office and I don't have or want a government travel card. What do I do if I am called to an emergency TDY – for example, to control a **flood?** If travel by air is required, your field manager will contact Sun Travel (or current government contract travel service agency) to make travel arrangements and have the travel agency charge the corporate account. The agency has a separate corporate account that will be issued on an emergency basis for use in securing and paying hotel rooms, and for meals. It is recommended that a field manager have FSD issue emergency travel advances by immediately faxing emergency travel orders to FSD. The advance will be in the traveler's bank account by the next business day. During extreme situations, the corporate card could be issued to a field manager via certified mail or to Richard Peace for him to take to the appropriate field office. The most senior person TDY will be responsible for using and securing the emergency corporate account. This individual must read and sign the document provided in Appendix B of this Directive. Travel reimbursement will be limited to costs not charged to the corporate account. Additionally, travel reimbursement will not be made to individuals until charges from corporate account have been reviewed to ensure the agency does not suffer duplicate charges. This is

not a recommended procedure and must have the agreement of the Chief, FSD or higher authority.

- **702.32 I** am attending a conference and my supervisor has authorized a GOV. May I take my spouse with me? In accordance with Volume 2, Chapter 805, government vehicles are strictly for official government use. The driver and passengers need to be on official government business to travel in the GOV. Therefore, a family member or friend cannot accompany you. You should request authorization to take your POV, so that your spouse can accompany you. *There is one important exception: if the U.S. Commissioner invites spouses to the USIBWC Annual Meeting, then use of the GOV is authorized.*
- **702.33** What am I entitled to if a permanent change of station (PCS) is authorized? You are only authorized what is specified in your PCS orders as approved by the Commissioner of the USIBWC. Please refer to Appendix C, Permanent Change of Station for All Entitlements.

#### 703. Travel Settlement.

- 703.1 When must I submit a travel claim? You must submit your travel claim: (a) within 5 working days after you complete the trip or period of travel; or (b) every 30 days if you are on continuous travel status. The travel reimbursement vouchers will be submitted on form SF 1012 through the traveler's supervisor to the Financial Services Division for processing. If an expense is disallowed, the voucher will continue to be processed for payment, but the traveler will be notified by telephone and e-mail the amount and reason for any disallowed or additional expenses.
- **703.2** Within how many calendar days after I submit a proper travel claim must my agency reimburse my allowable expenses? Your agency must reimburse you within 30 calendar days after you submit a proper travel claim to the agency's designated approving office.
- **703.3** Who must review and sign travel claims? The travel authorizing/approving official or his/her designee (e.g., supervisor of the traveler) must review and sign travel claims to confirm the authorized travel and that the expenses claimed appear reasonable and conform to the authorized travel request.

- **703.4** What are the reviewing official's responsibilities? The reviewing official must have full knowledge of the employee's activities, so that he/she can ensure:
  - (a) The claim is properly prepared in accordance with agency directive;
  - (b) A copy of the authorization for travel is provided;
  - (c) The types of expenses claimed are authorized and allowable;
  - (d) The amount claimed is accurate; and
  - (e) The required receipts, statements, justifications, etc. are attached to the travel claim.
- **703.5** How may I use frequent traveler benefits? On December 28, 2001, the President signed into law S. 1438, National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2002. Section 1116 of this law authorizes Federal employees to retain promotional items, including frequent flyer miles, earned on official travel.
- **703.6 Must I provide receipts to substantiate my claimed travel expenses?** Yes, you must provide a lodging receipt and receipts for all authorized expenses incurred over \$75, or a reason acceptable to your agency as to why you are unable to provide the necessary receipt.
- **703.7** A non-Federal source paid my travel and expenses, for which I received approval prior to commencing the business trip. However, they have reimbursed me than applicable limitations. How do I report this? Upon your return, submit your travel voucher and itemize all expenses incurred that exceed applicable limitations. You cannot be reimbursed in excess of expenses as you cannot "make a profit" by combination of reimbursements from your agency and another. At no time will reimbursement for expenses in excess of regulatory limitations exceed the amount of the expenses incurred. There is no difference as to whether the paying source is an IRS 501(c)(3) corporation or another federal government as under no circumstances can a profit be made by the traveler.
- 703.9 As part of my job, I will be speaking at a professional conference where part of my expenses will be paid by the conference organizers. However, the per diem is \$90 and the organizers are only paying \$60), what do I do? The agency shall reimburse you for those expenses not covered by payment from the other agency with applicable limitations as determined by the U.S. Section. The conference organizers must be federal agencies or IRS 501(c)(3) corporations only.
- 703.10 What do I do if the hotel rate exceeds the established lodging rate for the

- **area?** IBWC Form 078 must be completed and approved by the Chief, Administration Division to ensure full reimbursement.
- **703.11 How are the mileage, lodging and MI&E rates determined?** Reimbursement rates are based on semi-annual bulletins issued by General Services Administration for the continental United States and overseas.
- 703.12 How do I know what I will be reimbursed? You will be notified of any disallowances or corrections by telephone or e-mail. Otherwise, you will be reimbursed the same as your submission. All reimbursements are sent via electronic funds transfer to the account you designated. Contact FSD if you have not received the reimbursement to your bank account within 30 days of submission.
- 703.13 How do I challenge a disallowed claim? You must file a new claim with all supporting documentations and a copy of the notice of disallowance. The traveler has the right to appeal, which can include an administrative review by the Chief, Administration Department. Please contact the Chief, FSD for any disputed disallowed reimbursement prior to appealing the decision. If, after reconsideration by the U.S. Section, your claim is still denied you may submit your claim for adjudication to the GSA Board of Contract Appeals in accordance with 48 CFR Part 6104.

#### Appendix A

7	Fravel a	and Trai	ining F	orm(s)	Check		
		Trav	el Secti	on			
1. "Hours of work" are within "corresponding hours?"	Yes		No				
2. Is this a "controllable" event?	Yes		No				
3. Is employee exempt?	Yes		No				
a. Overtime required?	Yes		No		If yes, attach OT request.		
b. Comp time required?	Yes		No		If yes, attach CT request.		
Training Section							
4. Employee on compressed schedule?	Yes		No		If "yes," attach revised schedule.		
5. Course listed in the performance support section of performance standards?	Yes		No		If no, written justification is required.		
6. Training city/location -nearest or most accessible location?	Yes		No				
7. Training site - within walking distance or at the hotel/motel?	Yes		No		If yes, no rental car allowed without written justification.		
8. Similar or related training taken within the last 5 years?	Yes		No				
Funding Type							
S&E							
Reimbursable		Specify:					
Other		Specify:					
Prepared By:					Document No.		

IBWC Form 82

#### Appendix B

# Acknowledgment of Receipt and Responsibilities of the Emergency Corporate Card

corporate Citibank government travel card. M	acknowledge receipt of the emergency My signature below attests that I understand that wel use (e.g., meals and lodging, rental car, etc.) in
•	card. Upon conclusion of this TDY, I will return e Chief, FSD, whichever is most feasible. If the ertified, overnight mail.
agency. The toll free Citibank telephone num	use, I agree to quickly notify the bank and the aber is 1-800-790-7206. For outside the U.S., Virgin Islands, call collect at 904-954-7850.
Signature.	

# Appendix C Permanent Change of Station Supplement

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# INFORMATION REGARDING PAYMENT OF TRAVEL, TRANSPORTATION AND OTHER RELATED EXPENSES OF EMPLOYEES TRANSFERRING FROM ONE OFFICIAL STATION TO ANOTHER

This is the USIBWC guidance on the entitlements and limitations concerning allowances when a change of official station or related action is involved.

An employee is generally eligible for relocation expense allowances if:

- 1. A new appointee appointed to his/her first official duty station;
- 2. An employee transferring in the interest of the Government from one agency or duty station to another for permanent duty (and the duty station is at least 50 miles from the old duty station);
- 3. A student trainee assigned to any position upon completion of college work;
- 4. An employee eligible for a "last move home" benefit upon separation from the Government (or for the employee's immediate family in the event of the death of the employee prior to separation or after separation, but prior to relocating);
- 5. An employee who is being assigned to a temporary duty station in connection with a long-term assignment.

You may only begin your transfer or reassignment after your agency has approved your travel authorization (TA) in writing (paper or electronic). You must have the written TA before you relocate to your new official duty station. You may relocate from a place other than from where you are authorized, but you will be required to pay all additional costs incurred for expenses above your authorized travel and transportation cost.

When authorized and approved, travel and transportation expenses and applicable allowances provided by this guidance will be paid to you when transferring in the interest of the Government from one official station to another for permanent duty. Once a decision is made to pay or reimburse relocation expenses, all mandatory relocation allowances are reimbursed, unless otherwise stated in this guidance, the agency's travel directive or the employee's orders.

### Relocation that agency must pay or reimburse for an employee assigned to his/her first official station in the Continental United States (CONUS) are:

- 1. Transportation of employee and immediate family member(s)
- 2. Per diem for employee only
- 3. Transportation and temporary storage of household goods
- 4. Extended storage of household goods
- 5. Transportation of a mobile home or boat used as a primary residence in lieu of the transportation of household goods

Relocation allowance that an agency has discretionary authority pay or reimburse is

shipment of privately owned vehicle (POV).

## Relocation costs that agency must pay or reimburse for an employee who transfers between official stations in CONUS are:

- 1. Transportation and per diem of employee and immediate family member(s)
- 2. Miscellaneous moving expense
- 3. Sell or buy residence transactions or lease termination expenses
- 4. Transportation and temporary storage of household goods
- 5. Extended storage of household goods
- 6. Transportation of a mobile home or boat used as a primary residence in lieu of the transportation of household goods
- 7. Relocation income tax allowance (RITA)

## Relocation allowances that an agency has discretionary authority to pay or reimburse are:

- 1. House hunting per diem and transportation, employee and spouse only
- 2. Temporary quarters subsistence expense (TQSE)
- 3. Shipment of privately owned vehicle (POV)
- 4. Use of a relocation services company
- 5. Property management services
- 6. Home marketing incentives

The Financial Services Division can provide additional relocation allowance guidance by specific type.

"Official station or post of duty" as used herein means the building or other place where you regularly report for duty. For purposes of payment under these regulations relating to the residence and the household goods and personal effects of an employee, "official station or post of duty" also means the residence or other quarters from which you regularly commute.

No expenses incident to change of official station are allowable until you have agreed in writing to remain in the employ of the Government for twelve months following the effective date of your transfer, unless separated for reasons beyond your control, which are acceptable to the International Boundary and Water Commission, United States Section (USIBWC). If the agreement is violated, any monies received must be refunded, to include withholding tax allowance (WTA) and relocation income tax (RIT) allowance. A travel advance or claim will not be paid until the employment or service agreement is signed.

Your per diem for en route relocation travel between your old and new official stations will be at the standard CONUS rate available at <a href="http://www.gsa.gov/perdiem">http://www.gsa.gov/perdiem</a>. The number of authorized

days is the actual number of days to complete the relocation travel, but not to exceed an amount based on a minimum driving distance per day determined to be reasonable. The minimum driving distance generally will not be less than an average of 300 miles per calendar day. Exceptions to the daily rate can be made by your agency when due to circumstances outside of your control, such as acts of God or restrictions by Government officials; when the employee is physically handicapped; or other reasons acceptable to the agency. In order to be properly reimbursed, you must provide a statement on your travel claim explaining the circumstances that caused a delay.

The term "immediate family" as used herein means any of the following persons who are members of your household at the time you report for duty at your new official station:

#### a. Spouse;

- b. Children who are unmarried and less than 21 years of age who, regardless of age, are physically or mentally incapable of self-support. The term "children" includes natural offspring, stepchildren, adopted children, grandchildren, legal minor wards or other dependent children who are under your or your spouse's legal guardianship;
- c. Dependent parents, including step- and legally adoptive parents of you or your spouse *who receive at least 51 percent of their support* from you or your spouse;
- d. Dependent brothers and sisters, including step- and adoptive brothers and sisters of you or your spouse who are unmarried and under 21 years of age or who, regardless of age, are physically or mentally incapable of self-support.

"New appointee" includes any person newly appointed to Government service, including an individual appointed after a break in service. Individuals separated as a result of reduction in force or transfer of function may be treated as a transferee instead of new appointee.

#### ALLOWANCES FOR SUBSISTENCE AND TRANSPORTATION

NOTE: The allowance for en route per diem does not apply to immediate family members of new appointees.

When you are transferred, an allowance shall be paid for per diem expenses you and your immediate family incur while traveling between the old and new official stations. The prohibition on paying per diem for travel of 12 hours or less will apply to permanent change of station travel.

Per diem allowances will be computed for actual travel time limited to an average minimum driving distance of at least 300 miles per day. The maximum per diem rate you are allowed for your travel within **CONUS** (Conterminous United States) shall be the Standard CONUS Rate of \$86.00. The maximum allowable per diem rates for your immediate family are as follows:

#### For your spouse—

- a. When your spouse accompanies you while traveling between duty stations, he/she is authorized .75 of your per diem rate. (When more than one privately owned automobile is used, your spouse will be considered to have accompanied you if travel is performed on the same days along the same general route.)
  - b. When your spouse does not accompany you, he/she is authorized the same per diem rate

to which you are entitled. In such instances, your travel time and the amount of the per diem allowance you paid are not factors in computing the amount of per diem allowance for travel of your spouse.

For each other member of your immediate family -- \$64.50, or three-fourths of the per diem rate to which you are entitled is authorized for each other member age 12 or older, and \$43.00, or one-half of the per diem rate to which you are entitled is authorized for each child under 12 years of age.

You and your immediate family may travel by privately owned automobile or common carrier. If travel is by common carrier, you may use a Government Transportation Request (GTR). Less than first-class air accommodations must be used unless first class is justified on your travel authorization. When use of common carrier is authorized, you will be reimbursed the actual ticket costs plus related taxi fares to and from terminals. Any additional cost resulting from the use of a method of transportation other than the specifically shall be your responsibility.

Mileage for privately owned automobile (POV) travel will be reimbursed in accordance with the rates shown below based upon mileage of the usually traveled route between your old and new official stations.

MILEACE

	MILEAGE
OCCUPANTS OF POV	<u>RATE</u>
You only, or one member of your immediate family	\$0.15
You and one member, or two members of	\$0.17
your immediate family	

You and two members, or three members of your immediate family

\$0.19

You and three or more members, or four or more members of your immediate family

\$0.20

Use of more than one automobile is not considered advantageous to the Government except when justified under the following special circumstances:

- a. If there are more members of your immediate family than can reasonably be transported with luggage in one vehicle;
- b. If because of age or physical condition special accommodations are necessary in transporting a member of your immediate family in one vehicle, and a second automobile is required for travel of other members of your immediate family;
- c. If you must report to a new official station in advance of travel by members of your immediate family who delay travel for acceptable reasons such as completion of school terms, sale of property, settlement of personal business affairs, disposal or shipment of household goods, and temporary unavailability of adequate housing at the new official station;
- d. If a member of your immediate family performs unaccompanied travel between authorized points other than those for your travel.
  - e. If, in advance of your reporting date, immediate family members must travel to the new official station for acceptable reasons such as to enroll children at the beginning of the term.

When use of more than one automobile is justified, the mileage rate previously stated will apply for each. If the use of more than one privately owned automobile is not justified, the allowances shall be paid as if all persons involved traveled in one automobile.

#### 2. <u>ALLOWANCE FOR MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES</u>

**NOTE:** This allowance does not apply to new appointees.

A miscellaneous expense allowance is provided for defraying various contingent costs incurred in relocating your residence associated with transfer of official station. This allowance is related to expenses that are common to living quarters, furnishings, household, appliances, and other general types of cost inherent in the relocation of a residence. The types of costs intended to be reimbursed include the following:

- a. Fees for disconnecting and connecting appliances, equipment, and utilities involved in relocation, and costs of converting appliances for operation on available utilities;
- b. Fees for cutting and fitting rugs, draperies, and curtains moved from one residence quarters to another;
- c. Utility fees or deposits NOT eventually refunded;
- d. Forfeiture losses on nontransferable medical dental, and food locker contracts, and contracts for private institutional care, such as that provided for handicapped or invalid dependents only, which are not transferable or refundable;
- e. Private institutional care contracts that are not transferable or refundable;
- f. Transportation of house pets (dogs, cats, and other house pets), but not required inoculations, examinations, boarding quarantine or other costs in the moving process—other animals, such as horses, fish, birds, various rodents, etc. are excluded due to restrictions and special handling difficulties; and
- g. Costs of automobile registration, driver's license, and use taxes imposed when bringing automobiles into certain jurisdictions

You may claim the following miscellaneous expenses allowance, without supporting documents, on your travel voucher:

- \$500.00 or equivalent of one (1) week's basic pay, whichever is less, for an employee without an immediate family; or
- \$1,000.00 or the equivalent of two (2) weeks' basic pay, whichever is less, for an employee with an immediate family.

Allowances in excess of those provided above may be authorized or approved, if supported by acceptable statements of fact and either paid bills or other acceptable evidence justifying the amounts claimed, provided the total claim does not exceed your basic pay for one week if you are without an immediate family or two weeks if you have an immediate family. In no instance will the allowance exceed payment at the maximum rate of Grade GS-13. Your agency cannot authorize an advance of funds for miscellaneous expenses allowance.

# 3. TRAVEL FOR THE PURPOSE OF SEEKING PERMANENT RESIDENCE AT THE NEW OFFICIAL STATION – HOUSEHUNTING TRIP EXPENSES

#### NOTE: This allowance does not apply to new appointees.

The term "househunting trip" refers to a trip made by the employee and/or spouse for the purpose of locating a new permanent home in the new official station. New appointees or transferred student hires are not eligible for a househunting trip expenses allowance. The agency is **not** required to authorize payment of a househunting trip unless it is in the Government's best interest. Once authorized (i.e., determined to be in the Government's best interest), the agency will notify you of the procedures you must follow.

You may be paid a travel and transportation expense allowance for you and your spouse traveling together, or either of you, for **one** round trip to the new duty station to seek permanent living quarters to rent or purchase (includes obtaining location of a resident mobile home). **You** must accomplish the round trip the day before you report to your new official duty station. Your spouse must accomplish the trip the earlier of: (a) the day before your family moves to the new duty station, or (b) the day before the maximum time for beginning allowable travel expires (normally within two years).

The period of time allowed at Government expense may not exceed 10 calendar days, including travel time. Reasonable expenses for local transportation at the new official station shall be allowed in connection with an advance househunting trip. Authorization may provide for local transportation by common carrier, local transit systems, GSA contract rental or other commercially rented automobiles, or privately owned automobiles. However, the mode of transportation must be consistent with the mode of transportation authorized for travel to and from the new official station and determined to be advantageous to the Government. Expenses for the use of taxis shall be limited to transportation between depots, airports, or other carrier terminals, and place of lodging.

Per diem allowances for you and your spouse will be the same as those prescribed in Section 1. To receive reimbursement for househunting trip expenses, you must itemize your transportation expenses and provide receipts as required by your travel authorization. For fixed amount

househunting trip subsistence reimbursement, you do not need to document your subsistence expenses. You do need to itemize your lodging expenses and provide receipts. Your agency may authorize an advance of funds for househunting trip expenses.

You will be in a duty status during the authorized period of absence, and no charge for annual leave will be made. Reimbursement will not be made if, after making a trip to the new station, you decline the transfer. Funds advanced and/or costs of GTR, etc., must be repaid if you decline transfer.

#### 4. TEMPORARY QUARTERS SUBSISTENCE EXPENSES (TQSE)

#### **NOTE:** This allowance does not apply to new appointees.

The term "temporary quarters" refers to lodging obtained for the purpose of temporary occupancy from a private or commercial source. Your agency is not required to authorize payment of TQSE unless the agency determines that it is in the Government's interest. TQSE are subsistence expenses incurred by you and your immediate family while occupying temporary quarters. TQSE does not include local transportation expenses incurred during occupancy of temporary quarters. Such expenses may be authorized for a period of not more than 60 days while necessarily occupying temporary quarters. As a general policy, allowances for temporary quarters will not be approved if you have had adequate opportunity to complete arrangements for permanent quarters as the result of an authorized advance househunting trip.

Your agency will reimburse you for TQSE under the actual expense method unless it authorizes a "fixed amount" reimbursement instead. For the fixed amount TQSE reimbursement, you do not document your TQSE. For actual TQSE reimbursement, you must document your TQSE by itemizing each expense and providing receipts.

The administrative determination as to whether the occupancy of temporary quarters is necessary and the length of time for occupancy shall be made on an individual case basis, and shown on the travel authorization for transfer or reassignment up to the maximum of 60 days. You should submit requests for additional temporary quarters beyond the period authorized on travel authorization in writing, explaining the circumstances behind your request.

In computing the length of time allowed for temporary quarters at Government expense, the time will begin when either you or any member of your immediate family begins to use temporary quarters for which you claim reimbursement and shall run concurrently. The period will terminate when you or any member of your family occupies permanent type residence quarters, or the allowable time limit expires, whichever occurs first.

You will be reimbursed the actual charges for meals (including groceries consumed while occupying temporary quarters), lodging, fees and tips incident to meals and lodging, laundry, cleaning and pressing of clothing. Expenses of local transportation incurred for any purpose during occupancy of temporary quarters shall be disallowed. Expenses must be itemized to show the amounts spent daily for (1) lodging, (2) meals, (3) and other allowable expenses (including groceries). In all cases, receipts will be required for lodging, and laundry and cleaning expenses (except when coin-operated facilities are used). The form entitled Expense Record for Temporary Quarters (copy attached) shall be used to itemize expenses.

<u>Maximum Reimbursement</u>. The amount which may be reimbursed for temporary quarters subsistence expenses shall be the actual amount of allowable expenses incurred for each 30-day period not to exceed a maximum amount based on the applicable daily rate prescribed under paragraphs b through d, below, multiplied by 30. The daily actual subsistence expenses required to be itemized will be totaled for each 30-day period to permit a comparison with the maximum allowable amount for the particular period, if less than a 30-day period is authorized or used, the maximum allowable amount will be based on the number of days authorized or used, multiplied by the applicable daily rate.

- a. <u>Applicable maximum per diem rates</u>. The maximum per them rate to be used for computations under b through d below shall be the Standard CONUS rate of \$86 per day.
  - b. For the first 30 days. Reimbursement for the first 30 days will be limited as follows:
- (1) For you or your unaccompanied spouse (i.e., your spouse necessarily occupies temporary quarters in a separate location), the daily rate shall not exceed \$80;
- (2) For your spouse when accompanied by you, the daily rate shall not exceed \$57.34, or two-thirds (.75) of your daily rate established in paragraph a above;
- (3) For each other member of your immediate family who is 12 years of age or older, the daily rate shall not exceed \$57.34, or two-thirds (.75) of your daily rate established in paragraph a above;
- (4) For each other member of your immediate family who is under 12 years of age, the daily rate shall not exceed \$43, or one-half (.50) of the daily rate established in paragraph a above.
- c. For the second 30 days. The daily rates for the second 30-day period for you and each member of your immediate family shall be three-fourths of the daily rates prescribed under

paragraph b above.

- (1) For you or your unaccompanied spouse the daily rate shall not exceed \$64.50 (.75 times the applicable per diem rate);
  - (2) For your accompanying spouse, the daily rate shall not exceed .75 times the applicable per diem rate;
    - (3) For each other family member 12 years of age or older, the daily rate shall not exceed .75 times the applicable per diem rate; and
- (4) For each family member under 12 years of age, the daily rate shall not exceed.4 times the applicable per diem rate.
- d. <u>Additional 60 days</u>. When the agency authorizes an extension of time for occupancy of temporary quarters beyond the first 60 days (not to exceed an additional 60 days), the additional days shall be computed at the same rates allowed for the second 30-day period in paragraph c above, for you and each member of your immediate family.

Advance of Funds. Advance of funds may be made in 30-day increments. The initial advance of funds for temporary quarters subsistence expenses shall not exceed the maximum amount allowable for the first 30-day period (or other authorized period if less than 30 days). Thereafter, funds may be advanced for subsequent 30-day periods as authorized. You should request advance of funds as needed for the second and subsequently authorized 30-day periods in sufficient time to allow for processing, approval, and issuance of the advance of funds.

You will not be eligible for temporary quarters allowance when the distance between your old residence and your new official station is 40 miles or less. Temporary quarters expenses are allowable while awaiting arrival of household goods from your old residence. If your temporary quarters become your permanent residence quarters, you may receive a TQSE allowance only if you satisfactorily demonstrate that you initially intended to occupy the quarters temporarily.

# 5. <u>ALLOWANCE FOR EXPENSES INCURRED IN CONNECTION</u> <u>WITH RESIDENCE TRANSACTIONS</u>

**NOTE:** This allowance does not apply to new appointees.

You may be reimbursed for certain expenses incurred in the sale of one residence (which may be a mobile home) at your old official station, or the purchase (including construction) of one

dwelling at your new official station, or the settlement of an unexpired lease on your old residence or a lot on which your resident mobile home was located, provided that:

- a. The title to the residence, or the interest in a cooperative owned dwelling or an unexpired lease is in your name only, or in the joint names of you and one or more members of your immediate family, or solely in the name of one or more members of your immediate family. Your interest in the property must have been acquired prior to the date your were first officially notified of your transfer;
- b. The dwelling for which you are claiming reimbursement for selling expenses was your residence at the time you were first officially notified of your transfer;
  - c. You observe the time limitation, as follows:
- (1) <u>Initial period</u>. The settlement dates for the sale or purchase or lease termination for which you claim reimbursement are not later than 2 years after the date you reported for duty at your new official station.

#### (2) Extension of time limitation.

- (i) upon your written request and approval by the Commissioner or his/her designee, the 2-year time limitation may be extended for an additional period of time not to exceed 1 year.
- (ii) You should submit your written request to the appropriate agency official(s) as soon as you become aware of the need for an extension, but before the expiration of the 2-year limitation. In no case shall your request be submitted later than 30 calendar days after the expiration date unless this 30-day period is specifically extended by the USIBWC.
- (iii) Approval of this additional period of time shall be based on a determination that extenuating circumstances, acceptable to the USIBWC, have prevented you from completing the sale and purchase or lease termination transactions in the initial time frame, and that the residence transactions are reasonably related to the transfer of official station.
- (iv) When you are eligible for an extension of the time limitations for completion of a residence transaction and such an extension is approved by the USIBWC, relocation entitlement and allowances shall be determined by using the entitlements and allowances prescribed by regulations in effect on your effective date of transfer and not those in effect at the time the extension is approved.

d. The expenses for which reimbursement is claimed were paid by you. If you shared expenses with another person or people, reimbursement is limited to the portion you actually paid. If your residence is a duplex or other type of multiple occupancy dwelling in which you only partially occupy, or if you shared responsibility for a leased property (such as a shared apartment arrangement), expenses will be reimbursed on a pro-rata basis. You will also be limited to pro rata reimbursement when you sell or buy land in excess of that which reasonably relates to the residence site.

<u>Reimbursable expenses</u> are those incurred in connection with the sale or purchase of a residence, provided they are customarily paid by the seller of a residence in the locality of your old official station or by the purchaser of a residence at the new official station, to the extent they do not exceed specifically stated limitations, or in the absence thereof, amounts customarily paid in the locality of the residence:

- a. Brokers' fees and real estate commissions that you pay for services in selling your residence at your old official station, not to exceed the rates that are generally charged in the locality of your old official station.
  - b. The customary cost for an appraisal.
  - c. The costs of newspaper, bulletin board, multiple listing services and other advertising for the sale of your residence at your old official station that is not included in the broker's fee or the real estate agent's commission.
  - d. Legal (litigation costs are not reimbursable) and related expenses for both sale and purchase of residences for which you would customarily pay (e.g., title insurance policy, costs of preparing conveyances, other instruments, and contracts and related notary fees and recording fees; cost of making surveys, preparing drawings or plats when required for legal or financing purposes) and similar expenses incurred in selling your residence to the extent that:
    - 1. Have not been included in other residence transactions fees (i.e., brokers' fees or real estate agent fees);
    - 2. Do not exceed the charges, for such expenses, that are normally charged in the locality of your residence;
    - 3. Are usually furnished by the seller;
- e. The costs of searching title, preparing abstracts, and the legal fees for a title opinion to the extent that such costs:

- 1. Have not been included in other residence transactions fees (i.e., brokers' fees or real estate agent fees);
- 2. Do not exceed the charges, for such expenses, that are normally charged in the locality of your residence;
- f. The following "other" miscellaneous expenses in connection with the sale or purchase of your residence, provided they are normally paid by the seller or the purchaser in the locality of the residence, to the extent that they do not exceed specifically stated limitations, or if not specifically stated, the amount customarily paid in the locality of the residence:
  - 1. FHA or VA fee for the loan application;
  - 2. Loan origination fees and similar charges such as loan assumption fees and loan transfer fees in an amount not to exceed one (1) percent of the loan amount without itemization of the lender's administrative charges, if the charges are assessed in lieu of a loan origination fee and reflects charges for services similar to those covered by a loan origination fee;
  - 3. Cost of preparing credit reports;
  - 4. Mortgage and transfer taxes;
  - 5. State revenue stamps;
  - 6. Other fees and charges similar in nature to those listed in paragraphs a through f above, unless specifically classified as non-reimbursable expenses, below.
- g. Charge for prepayment of a mortgage or other security instrument in connection with the sale of your residence at your old official station to the extent the terms in the mortgage or other security instrument provide for this charge. This prepayment penalty is also reimbursable when the mortgage or other security instrument does not specifically provide for prepayment, provided this penalty is customarily charged by the lender, but in that case the reimbursement may not exceed 3 months' interest on the loan balance;
- h. Mortgage title insurance policy for the protection of and required by, the lender for which you paid on the residence you purchase;
- i. Owner's title insurance policy if it is a prerequisite financing or the transfer of the property; or if the cost is inseparable from other insurance cost that is a prerequisite to financing or the transfer of the property;
- j. Expenses in connection with construction of a residence, which are comparable to expenses that are reimbursable in connection with the purchase of an existing residence

- k. Expenses in connection with environmental testing and property inspection fees when required by federal, state or local law; or by the lender as a precondition to sale or purchase; and
- 1. Other expenses of sale or purchase made for required services that are customarily paid by the seller of a residence at the old official duty station or if customarily paid by the purchaser of a residence at the new official duty station.

Except as otherwise provided in paragraphs a through m above, the following are classified as non-reimbursable expenses:

- a. Any fees that have been inflated or are higher than normally imposed for similar services in the locality of the residence;
- b. Broker fees or commissions paid in connection with the purchase of a home at the new official duty station.
- c. Owner's title insurance policy, "record title" insurance policy, mortgage insurance or insurance against loss or damage of property, and optional insurance you pay in connection with the purchase of a residence for your protection;
  - d. Interest on loans, points, and mortgage discounts;
  - e. Property taxes;
  - f. Operating or maintenance costs;
- g. No fee, cost, charge, or expense determined to be part of the finance charge under the

Truth in Lending Act, Title I, PL. 90-321, as amended, and Regulation Z issued by the Board of

Governors of the Federal Reserve System (12 CFR Part 226), unless specifically authorized under

Reimbursable Expenses, above;

- h. Expenses that result from construction of a residence.
- i. Losses due to failure to sell your residence at your old official station at the price asked, at its current appraised value, at its original cost, or due to failure to buy a dwelling at your new official station at a price comparable to the selling price of your old residence, and any

similar losses, are not reimbursable.

Incidental charges made for required services in selling or purchasing residences may be reimbursable if they are customarily paid by the seller of a residence at your old official station or

by the purchaser of a residence at the new official station, to the extent they do not exceed amounts customarily charged in the locality of the residence.

The total amount of expenses that may be reimbursed is as follows:

- a. In connection with the sale of your residence at your old official station, reimbursement shall not exceed 10 percent of the actual sale price; or
- b. In connection with the purchase of a residence at your new official station, reimbursement shall not exceed 5 percent of the purchase price.

Expenses incurred for settling an unexpired lease for your old residence may include broker's fees for obtaining a sublease or charges for advertising an unexpired lease. Such expenses are reimbursable when:

- a. applicable laws or the terms of the lease provide for payment of settlement expenses;
  - b. such expenses cannot be avoided by sublease or other arrangements;
- c. you did not contribute to the expense by failing to give appropriate lease termination notice promptly after having definite knowledge of the transfer; and
- d. the broker's fees or advertising charges are not in excess of those customarily charged for comparable services in that locality.

To be reimbursed for the expenses incurred in selling or buying a residence, you must submit GSA Form 2494, Claim for Reimbursement of Closing Costs for Sale of Old Residence or GSA Form 2494-A, Claim for Reimbursement of Closing Costs for Purchase of New Residence (appropriate copy attached).

Your claim must be supported by documentation showing each item of expense you incurred and paid. Included in the required documents are:

- a. Copies of your sales agreement when selling a residence;
- b. Alternatively, your purchase agreement when buying a residence;
- c. Property settlement documents;

- d. Loan closing statements; and
- e. Invoices or receipts for other costs paid by you.

Reimbursement of any residence transaction expenses (or settlement of an unexpired lease) that occur prior to the employee being officially notified (generally in the form of a change of station travel authorization) is prohibited. You may not receive an advance of funds for your residence transaction expenses.

# 6. TRANSPORTATION OF MOBILE HOMES AND BOATS USED AS A PRIMARY RESIDENCE

If you are entitled to transportation of your household goods (HHG), you will be reimbursed for transporting a mobile home for use as a residence, not to exceed what the Government would incur for the transportation of your HHG and 90 days temporary storage. To be eligible for this allowance, you must certify in writing that your mobile home will be used as a residence for you and your immediate family at your new official station.

Allowances for transporting mobile homes, including mileage when towed by you, are in addition to payment of per diem, mileage, and transportation expenses for you and your immediate family. The allowable mileage between your old and new official duty stations shall be that shown in the standard highway mileage guides or actual miles driven as determined from odometer readings. Any substantial deviation from distances shown in the standard highway mileage guides must be fully explained and acceptable to your agency. The maximum amount to be authorized by your agency will not exceed the cost of transporting 18,000 pounds of HHG and 90 days of temporary storage.

#### 1. Computation of allowances.

- a. <u>Transportation by commercial carrier</u>. An allowance for transportation costs shall include the following:
- (1) The carrier's charges for actual transportation in an amount not exceeding the applicable tariff as approved by the Interstate Commerce Commission, or appropriate State regulatory body for intrastate shipments, for transportation of a mobile home of the size and type involved for the distance involved;
  - (2) Ferry fares and bridge, road, and tunnel tolls;
  - (3) Taxes, charges or fees fixed by a State or other government authority for

permits to transport mobile homes in or through its jurisdiction;

- (4) Carrier's service charges for obtaining necessary permits; and
- (5) Charges for a pilot (flag) car or escort services when required by State or local law.
- b. <u>Transportation</u> by private means. If your mobile home is towed by a privately owned conveyance, an allowance of 11 cents per mile shall be made as reimbursement for transportation costs listed in paragraph a. above. In addition, you may be reimbursed for the costs of preparing your mobile home for movement and resettling it at your destination as provided in paragraph d below.
- c. <u>Mixed method of transportation</u>. If your mobile home is transported partly by commercial carrier and partly by private means, the allowances described in paragraphs a and b above apply to the respective portions of the transportation.
- d. Other allowable transportation costs, In addition to the allowances provided for in paragraphs a through c above, the allowance for transportation includes, but are not limited to:
  - (1) Blocking and unblocking (including anchoring and unanchoring);
  - (2) Labor costs of removing and installing skirting;
  - (3) Cost of separating, preparing, and sealing each section for movement;
  - (4) Cost of reassembling the two halves of a double-wide mobile home; and
  - (5) Travel lift fees.
- (6) Rental, installation, removal and transportation of hitches and extra axles with wheels and tires:
- (7) Purchasing blocks in lieu of transporting blocks from old official station and cost of replacement blocks broken while mobile home was being transported;
  - (8) Packing and unpacking of HHG associated with the mobile home;
  - (9) Disconnecting and connecting utilities;
  - (10) Installation and removal of towing lights on trailer;

- (11) Charges for reasonable extension of existing water and sewer lines; and
- (12) Dismantling and assembling a portable room appended to a mobile home.
- e. <u>Unallowable costs</u>. The following costs relate to the miscellaneous expense allowance and shall **not** be included in your transportation allowance:
- (1) All costs for replacement parts, tire purchases, structural repairs, brake repairs, or any other repairs or maintenance performed;
- (2) Costs of insurance for valuation of mobile homes above carriers' maximum liabilities, or charges designated in the tariffs as "Special Service;"
  - (3) Cost of storage; and
- (4) Costs of connecting and disconnecting appliances, equipment, and utilities involved in relocation and costs of converting appliances for operation on available utilities.
- f. Optional use of Government bill of lading. Instead of the allowances in paragraphs a through e above, the USIBWC may assume direct responsibility for transporting your mobile home, if we determine such action to be in the government's best interest. In such instance, you will not receive any other allowance for the transportation involved and will be charged any cost the USIBWC pays under the bill of lading which would not be allowed or which is in excess of the total allowance as stated in (2) below.

#### 2. Limitation on allowances.

The total amount allowable shall not exceed the maximum allowable amount for transportation and 90 days' temporary storage of your household goods if the maximum quantity of household goods (18,000 pounds net weight) had been moved instead.

#### 3. Advance of Funds.

You may receive an advance of funds when you are responsible for arranging and paying a commercial carrier to transport your mobile home. However, the advance must not exceed the estimated amount allowable. No advance is authorized if the agency pays the carrier directly.

#### 7. TRANSPORTATION AND STORAGE OF HOUSEHOLD GOODS

#### 1. Transportation of Household Goods

Household goods include all personal property associated with the home and all personal effects belonging to an employee and the immediate *family* when shipment or storage begins, which can be legally accepted and transported as household goods by an authorized commercial carrier in accordance with the rules and regulations established or approved by an appropriate Federal or State regulatory authority except the items listed in paragraphs a through d below. Snowmobiles and vehicles with two or three wheels, e.g., motorcycles, mopeds, and golf carts, may be shipped as household goods. The following items are specifically excluded from the definition of household goods:

- a. Automobiles, trucks, vans and similar motor vehicles; boats; airplanes; mobile homes; camper trailers; and farming vehicles;
  - b. Live animals, birds, fowls, and reptiles;
  - c. Cordwood and building materials; and
- d. Property for resale, disposal, or commercial use rather than for use by the employee or the immediate family.

Generally, carrier's tariffs prohibit household goods carriers from accepting the articles listed below for shipment. You are advised to consult applicable tariffs or to contact the carrier involved if problems arise concerning shipment of the following prohibited articles:

- a. Property liable to impregnate or otherwise damage equipment or other property (e.g., hazardous articles including explosives, flammable and corrosive materials, and poisons);
- b. Articles that cannot be taken from the premises without damage to the article or the premises;
- c. Perishable articles including frozen foods, articles requiring refrigeration, or perishable plants unless:
- (1) Shipment is to be transported not more than 150 miles and/or delivery accomplished within 24 hours from the time of loading;
  - (2) No storage of shipment is required; and

(3) No preliminary or en route servicing, watering or other preservative method is required of the carrier.

Items that are irreplaceable or are of extreme value or sentiment are not provided special security even though extra-value insurance may be purchased. Employees and their immediate families are advised to personally transport these types of items.

There are two methods for the reimbursement of transportation of household goods. Your agency will determine which of the following methods will be authorized.

(a) <u>Commuted Rate System</u> where you make your own arrangements for transporting household goods between your old and new official stations. You select and pay the carrier or transport your goods by noncommercial means and are reimbursed by the USIBWC in accordance with schedules of commuted rates, which are contained in the *GSA* publication, Commute Rate Schedule for Transportation of Household Goods. The commuted rate includes costs of line-haul transportation, packing, crating, unpacking, drayage incident to the transportation, and other accessorial charges.

Claims for reimbursement under the commuted rate system shall be supported by a receipted copy of the bill of lading including any attached weight certificate copies. If no bill of lading was involved, other evidence showing points of origin and destination and the weight of the goods must be submitted. If you transport your own household goods, you are cautioned to establish the weight of such goods by obtaining proper weight certificates showing gross weight (weight of vehicle and goods) and tare weight (weight of vehicle alone) because compliance with the requirements for payment at commuted rates on the basis of constructive weight is usually not possible.

(b) <u>Actual Expense Method</u> where your agency assumes the responsibility for arranging and paying for all aspects (e.g., packing/unpacking, pickup/delivery, weighing, line-haul, drayage, temporary storage, etc.) of transporting your HHG and PBP&E with a commercial HHG carrier.

#### 2. Temporary Storage of Household Goods

Temporary storage of household goods at USIBWC expense may be allowable only when such storage is incident to transportation of the household goods at USIBWC expense.

Under the commuted rate system, you will be reimbursed the actual costs for storage including in and out charges and necessary drayage not to exceed the commuted rates for storage in the GSA publication, Commuted Rate Schedule for Household Goods or other amount authorized by the agency. A receipted copy of the warehouse or other bill for storage costs is required to

support reimbursement.

#### 3. Maximum Weight of HHG

The maximum weight allowance of HHG that may be shipped or stored at Government expense is 18,000 pounds net weight. The 18,000 pounds HHG weight limitation is mandated by statute and cannot be exceeded. Shipments of professional books, papers and equipment (PBP&E) that cause the shipment to exceed the maximum weight allowance can be transported to the new duty station as an administrative expense of the agency.